

It's About YOUTH

Newsletter of the Utah State Youth Council on Workforce Services • January 2007



One comes to believe whatever one repeats to oneself sufficiently often, whether the statement be true or false. It comes to be dominating thought in one's mind.

Robert Collier

What's New:

- 2 **Creating New Opportunities for Collaboration**
- 4 **Spotlight: Northern Region**
- 10 **Region Updates**
- 16 **Youth Council Schedule**
- 16 **Contact Information**



Chair's Message

It is that time of year in which many stop to reflect on their accomplishments during the past year. And if you are like me, many a New Year's resolution has been set along with almost as many as have been broken! In all seriousness, now is the time to take a few minutes and reflect back on this past year. What has changed? What progress have you made on goals you set for yourself? Are you the person you want to be? No matter how old or young you are, or what circumstances you come from, or experiences you have; striving to be the person you want to be and setting and meeting goals is an eternal process.

As I reviewed the past year's Just for YOUTH newsletters, I was overwhelmed with all of the successes highlighted from all areas of the state. Whether it was sharing the success of completing high school, obtaining employment or developing and finishing a community service project that benefited others, the stories were numerous and I am sure there are a lot more to tell. It reminded me how much there is to celebrate. Keep working on your goals. In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Marie Christman

NEW

Opportunities for Creating Collaboration

A Shared Vision for Youth

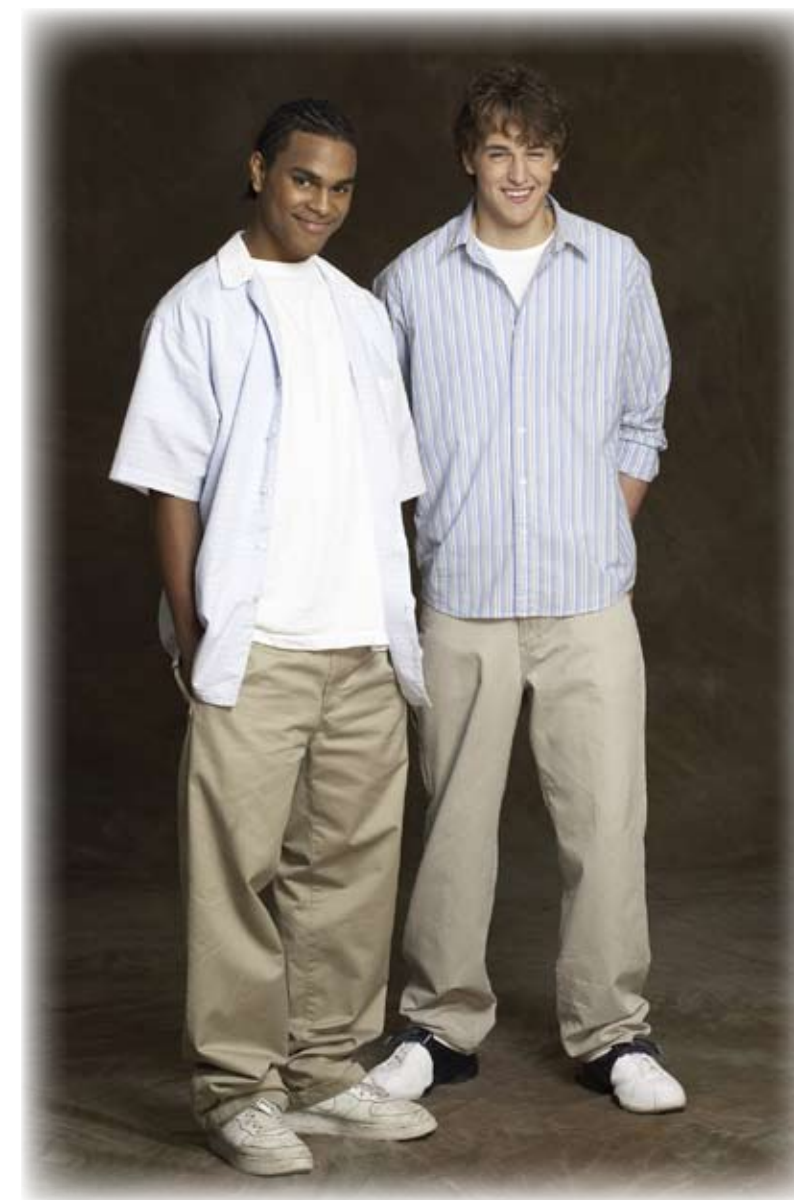
BY JANE BROADHEAD AND CONNIE LAWS

The Federal Youth Coordination Act passed in September 2006, establishing the Federal Youth Development Council, which is chaired by Mike Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services. Utah was selected to be one of 16 states invited to attend a Shared Vision for Youth Forum in Atlanta, Georgia September 27 and 28. This forum was sponsored by a joint Federal Team from the following agencies:

- US Department of Education
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- US Department of Justice
- US Department of Labor
- US Social Security Administration
- Corporation for National & Community Services

At the forum, the Federal Partnership announced the availability of additional support and funding to states participating in the Forum for pilot projects. The funding available through the pilot will assist states to build their infrastructure. Utah's Youth Vision Team intends to use funds to build upon the success of the Transition to Adult Living initiative to improve services and outcomes for at-risk youth. The current composition of Utah's team is:

- Department of Workforce Services – WIA, Connie Laws and Jane Broadhead
- Department of Human Services – DCFS, Pamela Russell, and JJS, Ron Harrell
- Community and Culture - Housing and Urban Development – Richard Walker and Mike Glenn
- Mountainland Consortium of Schools - WIA Youth Provider – Brandon Sewell
- Utah State Office of Education - Youth in Custody – Travis Cook
- Utah State Office of Rehabilitation - Work Incentive Program Assistance – Lloyd Laws



Time at the forum was spent discussing the needed infrastructure to ensure Utah has a powerful partnership; we began development on a state and local roll-out plan. We recognized the partnerships that were developed under the Transition to Adulthood initiative started by Governor Walker. Our goal is to strengthen and expand this existing partnership to ensure that "Utah's At-Risk Youth will Live Successfully as Adults."

Things in the Bear River area are busy! We recently added an ETV (Education and Training Voucher) youth to our Regional Youth Council, and really appreciate the insight and feedback she offers. On a sad note, we are losing Grant Bartholomew as a council member representing DCFS; Grant has decided to retire. We wish him the very best and thank him for his service. Although we wish him well in his new endeavors, he will be sorely missed.

We held a planning and strategy meeting with management in November to review youth services. We set a goal to increase the number of paid internships for our youth, as we see this as a great opportunity for them to gain skills as well as career exploration experience. We also discussed strategies for advertising and for targeting out-of-school youth.

Here's a quote that we feel sums up the philosophy of the WIA Youth Program: **"Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside them was superior to circumstances."**
Bruce Barton

Heidi Lemon became our new part-time case manager for the Logan WIA Youth Team in August when Heather Bateman left for motherhood duties. Heidi has been with our agency for over two years, and is currently a Workforce Specialist II; she works full-time in our office and shares other case management duties.

Heidi also serves as a liaison between our office and the local BATC (Bridgerland Applied Technology Center). This connection has proven to be a very valuable resource in orchestrating the mission of the DWS training programs, especially the WIA Youth and Adult programs. Heidi



Heidi Lemon

mans a satellite station at BATC on Tuesday mornings. She is available to meet with students and help them with their training needs and job search.

Heidi graduated from Utah State University in 2004 with a degree in Family and Human Development, Community Services Emphasis. She has past experience working for the local CAPSA (Crisis Abuse Prevention Services Agency) as the Crisis Intervention Advocate and Weekend Shelter Manager. Heidi is a Certified Family Life Educator. She has also been involved as a volunteer with the Special Olympics. Heidi and her husband Derek reside in Logan.

Bear River Successful Youth

Desirea P. enrolled in the WIA youth program in June of 2005. She was a high school drop out, single mother and financially not able to return to school. The WIA youth program was able to help Desirea complete high school and she received her

diploma in August of 2005. She still had a desire to do more for herself and child. She completed the assessment testing and together with her WIA Employment Counselor, they determined that she had the interest and aptitude to succeed in the dental field. She enrolled in the dental assisting program at Bridgerland Applied Technology College this past October.

With hard work, Desirea finished the program in just one year. She was able to internship at a local dentist office and was also selected as a fill in at another dentist office. Desirea was recently hired by Dr. Daines as a dental assistant. She is working and doing the type of work that she always wanted to do. Desirea has worked hard to overcome many obstacles and challenges. She has made tremendous accomplishments in her life.

Adam A. is 21 and has just recently enrolled in the WIA youth program. Adam was facing multiple barriers such as substance abuse, court, counseling, and being basic skills



Desirea P. on the job.



Adam A.

Bear River Cont.

deficient. Adam's work history included entry level jobs in agriculture, production, and welding. Adam decided that instead of just using his muscles and getting dirty to build things, he would instead incorporate his brain and computer skills to design and draft them. He then set his goal on becoming a drafter.

During the last 6 months Adam has worked his own way through the academic learning classes at BATC, maintained employment, and continued to succeed in his drug counseling. He is now participating in the WIA Youth program. Adam is now enrolled at BATC in the Drafting program and is well on his way to achieving his goals.



Danielle K.

Danielle K. is 20 years old and is one of our ETV recipients. Dani originally was enrolled in the WIA youth program thru the Y.E.S. program while living in Salt Lake City. Dani is a high school graduate, but faced numerous obstacles including being basic skills deficient, being in foster care, and a sporadic work history.

With her foster family moving to Logan, she was faced with adjusting to a new area, aging out of foster care, and being unemployed. Dani also knew she had to get more schooling and/or training in order to make it better for herself. After lots of hard work, some tough decisions, and dedication, Dani is currently working her way through the academic learning classes at BATC. She has has a goal of completing these courses and enrolling in the full time

Medical Assisting program in January 2007. Dani is also working full time as a manager at the Smithfield Pizza hut. She is working hard to achieve her goals and looks forward to her future.

Tiffany N. is a 21 year old mother of two young children. Two months after the birth of her youngest she came to us desiring to finish her GED. In her words, her father told her she'd "never get it done". Despite medical problems from the birth of her youngest child, Tiffany studied for the GED all on her own and passed it on her first attempt four months later! Now she is helping her boyfriend study for the GED! And she proudly called her father to inform him she DID get it done! We are now working on getting her into a secondary education program because this has lit the fire under her to achieve her dream of becoming a drafter for an architecture firm.

Wasatch North

Letarik B. moved here from Ethiopia a little over one and a half years ago. She spoke very little English when she first came here, was 18 years old, and was expecting her first child. She had not completed high school and had no work history. These barriers made it very difficult for her to find employment. Letarik enrolled in the WIA Youth program and received help in getting involved at the English Language Center. She has completed the first two levels of ESL classes.

We found a worksite that was willing to give Letarik the opportunity to learn some skills and we created a paid youth internship for her. She began at the Child and Family Support Center in September where she helps out with the children in the nursery, cleans, and does other projects as needed. Letarik has received very complimentary reports from her supervisor there. They say that she is very cheerful, does great with the children, and completes all of her assigned work wonderfully well and ahead of schedule.

During the months at her worksite people have noticed a huge difference in Letarik. She and her worker had, until then, always conversed through a translator. Now Letarik is not afraid to call her worker on the phone and she comes to her appointments without a translator. She is very excited when she's asked how her worksite is going and replies, "It is so nice, thank you!" On the job she is taking on new responsibilities such as talking to parents and doing simple paperwork with them as well; she is also learning to use the computer. A little while ago a remark was made about Letarik—that she looks taller. The reply was that she isn't any taller but that she holds her head up higher now!

Brody V. dropped out of high school as a sophomore because he didn't see a reason to go. He had poor grades his entire life partly because his family situation didn't require him to apply himself to schoolwork. This year, after watching his sister succeed in school with the help of FTT (Futures Through Training), Brody decided to see if he

could get his diploma. Brody, 19, was enrolled in the WIA Youth program through FTT, Inc. on September 18, 2006. In the six weeks Brody has been in the program he hasn't missed a day at the Northridge Learning Center. He has successfully completed 9 of the 14 credits he needs to graduate and is excited about the prospects he has for a good job when he gets his diploma. He can see the connection between the diploma and a better job, a better car, and so on.

Brody is now looking forward to going into an automotive program after he gets a diploma, which is something he hadn't even thought about when he first walked through our doors in September.

Jazmin G. is 21 years old, is married, and has one child. She has been in the WIA program since June 2005. At the time she entered the program, she was in need of obtaining her high school diploma/GED and had very limited work experience. She has struggled in the past with a lack of motivation and therefore found it difficult to follow through with any one task. She also struggled with an attitude of entitlement.

Jazmin and her worker built a rapport with each other and over time the worker began to see a lot of change in her. She still had a sense of entitlement, but her confidence was growing. Her attitude began to change from one of "I can't," to "I can." She began Adult Education and in July 2006 obtained her high school diploma. This past summer, she was set up on a paid

Wasatch North Cont.

internship at Project Success as a receptionist; then worked temporarily in a daycare setting. She then worked in the HEAT office at FTT as a receptionist. She got off to a rough start, but once the rules were laid out for her and she was given some extra guidance, she excelled at the site and worked there until the end of the Summer Youth Program.

Now employed as a property manager, Jazmin is really thankful for her opportunity to be involved with WIA. Jazmin recently represented the Northern Region at the Council of Councils and personally met Governor Huntsman.

Jessica M. is one of a family of five that lives in a two-bedroom trailer home. She recently graduated from high school with the support of the WIA Youth program. She is currently attending the DATC and is enrolled in the dental assisting program. Jessica has been able to keep up good attendance and progress at the DATC while working two part time jobs. She has been able to maintain one of these positions for over a year.

Jessica deals positively with the pressures of poverty. Jessica's father is disabled and is not able to work. Her mother is working, but struggles to meet their financial obligations. Through her many struggles, Jessica has kept a positive attitude and works hard to try and better her family's situation.

Manuel G. started with FTT when he was 15 years old. He came from a family with a very low income. He had failing grades in school and poor attendance. Manuel was also basic skills deficient. Success did not come easily or quickly for Manuel. He had many problems and issues in high school. Eventually he was placed in the school's "3 to 6" program. During the summer months, Manuel was given a job through the FTT Summer Youth Employment Opportunity. He was placed into a summer work site at H&L Auto.

This site was selected for Manuel in an attempt to find a place where he could find success. Manuel had developed an interest in working on cars and it was hoped this would be a good fit. Despite some early problems with Manuel at the site, he continued on and completed the summer work program successfully. Manuel was not able to complete his last semester of high school, and it was determined that the best outlook for Manuel would be to take the GED which he did and passed. Upon completion of the GED, H&L Auto hired Manuel full-time, where he is currently employed.

*If you think you can, you can.
And if you think you can't, you're right.*

Mary Kay Ash



Region Updates

Western Region



Western Region is working very hard to recruit out-of-school youth into the program. Organizations have distributed flyers and posters, printed articles in newspapers (including college newspapers) and visited with other agencies and learning institutions. Our youth workers attend meetings with different agencies to tell them about the youth program. They are working with Juvenile Justice Services and Adult Justice courts to find at-risk youth. Some offices are putting flyers in places where kids hang out. This has brought a lot of youth into the center to inquire about the program.

We are working on a Spring Fling to be held in February and March. We will invite agencies and businesses so we can educate them about the youth program and get people involved in becoming a "Door Opener" for youth. We will spend one day with WIA youth and prospective youth to provide a learning environment for them where they can learn the realities of life. Stay tuned for the outcome of this event in the next newsletter.

Southeastern Region

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECTS Eleven Moab youth celebrated Earth Day by collecting and disposing of trash and recyclables, painting recycling barrels, and learning about the benefits of recycling. Their WIA Youth partner was Grand County's High School mentors and mentees; they cleaned the roadsides leading to Potato Salad Hill and the area in and surrounding the main Sand Flats Recreation area parking lot.

The youth began their day of service by gathering trash and recyclables that were littering the Potato Salad Hill area of the BLM land located just east of the city of Moab. Potato Salad Hill is heavily impacted during the annual Jeep Safari/Spring Break by visitors who use the area for off road vehicle challenges. Volumes of trash are left after the event, which, if not removed, find their way into the waters of Millcreek, where many barefoot Moab children play during hot summer days.

After spending a couple of hours at the Potato Salad Hill, the youth went to the nearby Sand Flats Recreation Area and gathered trash and recycleables on the entire main parking lot and adjacent lands. All of the trash was collected and disposed of properly. Our Earth Day service project was pronounced a success on several levels.

Region Updates

Successful Youth

Mountainland

Natosha B. started working with the WIA Youth Program in June of 2005. Natosha was trying to complete her high school education and obtain occupational skills so that she could work and provide for her family as a single parent. She had several barriers that made it difficult for her to obtain her high school diploma/GED. She was also employed. She wanted to complete her high school education in order to begin an advanced training program so that she could gain the skills to someday work as an administrator.

Shortly after her enrollment in the WIA Youth Program, Natosha successfully completed a life skills workshop and a social skills workshop through which she gained skills she needed for independent living. In addition, she participated in the 2005 and 2006 WIA Youth service projects that allowed her to serve young single mothers who are going through similar trials that she went through.

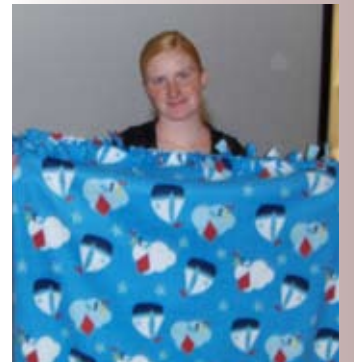
Natosha has also obtained more suitable employment since she has been with the WIA Youth Program. In November 2006, she obtained her GED. She is currently in the enrollment process at the MATC (Mountainland Applied Technology College) for advanced training in accounting. Natosha is working on

certifications in accounting so that she can pursue a career as an office manager. She is well on her way to becoming a successful independent individual and a provider for her family.

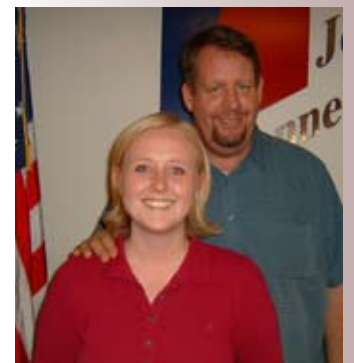
Western

Holly W. enrolled in the WIA program in the summer of 2004. She has made a lasting impression. Optimistic about the future, Holly had realistic expectations in order to reach her goal of becoming an elementary school teacher. She never wavered from her goal. She had two years of college and wished to complete the last two. As a new single mother, she understood she had some barriers to overcome and she did just that...she overcame those barriers with a positive attitude. Once Holly understood the expectations she made sure she did her part.

In summary, Holly is a hard worker who is dedicated to making a success of herself and to providing a wonderful future for herself and her daughter. She takes on—and overcomes—any obstacle with a positive attitude. She completed her student teaching in October 2006. She was offered employment by the Washington County School District, and she is currently working as a fourth grade school teacher at East Elementary!



Natosha B.



Holly W.



Region Updates



Chandler V.

Chandler V. came into the WIA Youth program when he was 14 years old. He and his brother lived with their aunt since he was four and his brother was two. His aunt called to see if she could get him on the WIA Youth program because she felt he needed some focus in his life.

From the beginning Chandler was excited and willing to participate. He started working at a local Motel /Restaurant on a Summer Youth Employment Experience. His supervisor and everyone loved him. He was dependable and wanted to work more hours.

When work ended and school began, Chandler began to spiral downhill. He wanted to spend time with his friends, and he missed a significant amount of school. His grades reflected that with mostly D's and F's. Chandler's assessment tests showed that he had the potential for good grades, so his WIA Youth Leadership mentor and case manager started meeting with him on a regular basis. They began tracking his attendance and grades and began working with his teachers. Chandler wanted to participate in sports, so we talked to him about how a good GPA could help him do that. Chandler began receiving cash incentives when he could show improvement in his attendance and grades.

During the next summer Chandler attended the Western Region Youth Leadership Conference. It meant a

long day, leaving home at 6:00 am and returning at 6:00 pm., but it was fun! As soon as school was out the Motel / Restaurant asked him to return to work because he had done such a good job the summer before.

So far, this school year has been awesome! Chandler has only missed a few days his first quarter – and all of the days he has missed have been excused. His grades were A's and B's. He played football and is now getting into wrestling. Chandler can see what a difference he can make at school and at home. He is being a great example to his little brother and to his friends.

Jeremiah S. came onto the WIA youth program in June of 2005 because he wanted a summer job. He was placed on a worksite and he worked hard during the summer. Jeremiah was struggling in school and was receiving failing grades because he missed more school than he attended. With the counseling of his youth worker and employment counselor, he was enrolled in the alternative school. Incentives were offered to motivate him to complete school.

Jeremiah learned at an early age that he had no one else to rely on but himself. He had a strong desire to complete high school and to have a career. In November, he completed a quarter credit in literature and received an A-. He has only missed ½ day of his classes since school started in August. He is putting forth a tremendous



Region Updates

effort that is beginning to pay off for him. Teachers and even the principal have commented on the change in his attitude. He completed a credit in Algebra that has allowed him to stay at the alternative school. Jeremiah has received incentives from the WIA Youth program for school attendance and completion of work. He is living with his grandmother so the incentives he receives were very helpful and the have motivated him. He still has a ways to go but is on the right track. Most importantly, Jeremiah has seen what he can do and believes in himself.

Eastern

Pepper T. came to our office as a 14-year-old youth who wanted to gain work experience. She was placed on a job site for the summer where she did an awesome job. She was always on time and worked well with other employees and her supervisor; she completed all tasks she was asked to perform. Her supervisor was so impressed with her work ethic that he kept her on as a substitute employee when school started in the fall.

Now employed part time by a different employer, Pepper will continue to excel and build on the occupational skills she has already developed. Pepper participated in the youth leadership project last summer where she helped plant flowers on Main Street in Roosevelt. She now is also focusing on increasing her basic skill levels in school.

Randi M. is stepping high to reach her goals. Since coming into the Vernal DWS Office, she has participated in and utilized many of our services. Randi completed the WIA youth readiness skills and then successfully completed a WIA Youth Training Internship at the U.S. Forest Service. Her performance while working for the Forest Service was rewarded with an Exceptional Recognition Award. They praised her commitment to her training and to them as an employer.

During this period Randi excelled in developing other skills by completing the DWS sponsored Assertive Communication Class and by attending the New Mom's Support Group Classes sponsored by Tri-County Health Department. During this period of time, she also co-chaired the WIA Youth Project, **Turn Off TV Week**, held at the Uintah County Library.

This was a week of hands-on projects to encourage youth to turn off the television and find other avenues for entertainment and learning. This was very successful and Randi's contributions were valuable.

Randi attended the Uintah Basin Vocational School in Vernal and excelled in business classes. She plans to continue her schooling to obtain a certificate in business. Randi is currently working as a supervisor for a cleaning company. She is a single mother who is working towards a bright future and who is a positive



Randi M., seated front



Region Updates

role model for her daughter. Randi is highly motivated; she is taking positive steps to achieve her goals.

Central

Payam A. enrolled in the Youth EmployAbility Services (YES) program May 20, 2004. Payam is a refugee from Iran; he came to the U.S. and Utah in October 2003 with no high school credits. Due to Payam's dedication and desire to complete his education he attended day school, completed packets, and did whatever necessary to graduate. Payam accomplished this goal by graduating with his high school diploma from Horizonte June 2005.

Payam was interested in the medical field and his next goal was to go to college. Payam attended Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) during the summer of 2004 and obtained his Nursing Assistant Certificate. Payam then researched additional medical careers and decided he wanted to become a dentist and found out that SLCC has a suggested pathway for those interested in going beyond their curriculum to become a dentist or medical doctor.

Since Payam began attending SLCC in the fall of 2004 he has been working on the pre-dentistry and pre-medical pathway. Payam has accumulated 60 college credits and has maintained a 3.95 GPA while at SLCC. Due to his educational achievements and dedication, SLCC nominated him for

the "Governor Scholar 2006" award. Payam received this award and was able to meet and have lunch with Governor Huntsman.

Payam plans to transfer to the University of Utah in the fall of 2007 in order to continue pursuing his educational goal of becoming a dentist. Along with helping Payam with his schooling, the YES program was able to assist him in completing a 40 hour unpaid internship with a dentist in Salt Lake. This helped him to learn more about the dental profession and to receive some real life experience.

Currently being employed at Home Depot helps Payam with his financial support while attending college. He is dedicated to his education and has shown this dedication by his excellent performance in school. He always strives to do his best consequently he will achieve his dreams!

Ian L. is an accomplished student and stellar client. He entered the YES Program in November 2004 seeking to continue his education beyond a high school diploma and to develop occupational skills that would lead him to a great career. His initial interest was in computers, specifically graphics, which interest would allow him to express his creative talents in a rewarding way. Ian quickly enrolled in the Salt Lake/Tooele Applied Technology College (SLTATC) in the newly created graphics program

there. With flawless attendance and hard work he completed the coursework more quickly than the new curriculum was designed for. He earned certificates in Computer Literacy, Media Design Introduction, and Graphics Design Applications.

Rather than lose momentum while additional coursework was developed, Ian decided to turn his efforts to a high growth industry career as a Pharmacy Technician. He quickly changed to find success in this new occupational skills training. He completed the SLTATC training, passed his exams, and earned a Pharmacy Technician Certificate. Concurrent with his schoolwork Ian also completed a 180 hour externship at Walgreen's as a Pharmacy Technician. He excelled in this demanding schedule and accomplished his education and employment skills goals with impressive dedication. At the conclusion of this externship Walgreen's hired Ian as a full-time Pharmacy Technician. He has retained this employment for six months and is a valued member of their professional team.

Ian has continued to pursue his creative talents. He used his experience and talent in graphics design to create a multi-media art piece that the SLTATC used in their education catalog. Ian also finds self-expression in digital photography and has sold several of his photographs.

Ian has also found time to participate in Leadership service activities. He became involved in creating blankets and quilts for the YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter along with assembling donated "essentials baskets" to benefit the women and children living at the shelter.

To round off his YES participation, Ian is completing driver's education and expects to have it completed soon. He is currently compiling a portfolio to showcase his accomplishments and to complete the last of the elements in the prestigious YES Certificate of Achievement.


Ian's exceptional story of success in academics, employment, and personal development showcase the power of diligence and determination.



Ian L. proudly displays his certificates.



Region Updates



The State Youth Council meets as part of the State Council on a quarterly basis. The next meeting will be held in April 2007.



Contact Information

If you have suggestions or comments for the newsletter, please contact Julie Lay at jlay@utah.gov. If you have questions regarding the State Youth Council, please contact Jane Broadhead at jbroadh@utah.gov or go to our Web page at jobs.utah.gov and select State Council/State Youth Council.

If you have questions regarding youth services or youth programs, please contact the Youth Specialist in your area:

Northern: Julie Anderson, julieanderson@utah.gov
Mountainland: Zenaida Martinez, zmartinez@utah.gov
Central: Rod Barlow, rbarlow@utah.gov

Western: Ann Barnson, abarso@utah.gov
Eastern: Tami Huntington, thunting@utah.gov

If you have questions regarding Regional Youth Councils in your area or your Regional Council, please contact the Regional Council Coordinator in your area:

Northern: Susan Wright, susanwright@utah.gov
Mountainland: Julie Lay, jlay@utah.gov
Central: Cassy Hahn, chahn@utah.gov
Eastern: Bob Gilbert, bobgilbert@utah.gov
Western: Lorrie Economy, leconomy@utah.gov

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